

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MONTEV 03059 100309Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 SP-02 DHA-02 NSCE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 USIE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 /057 W

-----062382 100312Z /62

O 100244Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4442

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 3059

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, SHUM, UY

SUBJ: PROPOSED USG REACTION TO GOU ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTIONS  
FOR 1981

1. FOLLOWING THEIR RETURN FROM A WEEKEND RETREAT, THE HIGH COMMAND OF THE ARMED FORCES MET WITH PRESIDENT AND PRINCIPAL CIVILIAN OFFICIALS LATE THIS AFTERNOON. THE EARLIER REPORTS WE HAD RECEIVED THAT THEY MIGHT CONSIDER A POLITICAL OPINING WERE CONFIRMED BY A PUBLIC STATEMENT EARLY THIS EVENING BY PRESIDENT MENDEZ WHICH ANNOUNCED NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER 1981 WITH UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE. POLITICAL ACTIVITY WILL CONTINUE PROSCRIBED UNTIL SOME UNDETERMINED TIME IN 1980. THE ANNOUNCEMENT ALSO REPEATS SOME OF THE TIME-WORN JARGON OF THE ARMED FORCES REGARDING THE SUBVERSIVE THREAT AND THE DANGER PRESENTED BY THE OLD LEADERSHIP OF THE TRADITIONAL PARTIES. FULL TEXT AND ANALYSIS OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWS IN SEPTTEL.

2. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT IS PUBLIC CONFIRMATION OF WHAT HAD BEEN A STATED POLICY WHEN MENDEZ WAS BROUGHT IN TO TAKE THE PRESIDENCY AFTER THE OUSTER OF BORDABERRY. THE TIMING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT CLEARLY WAS INFLUENCED BY YOUR IMMINENT ARRIVAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MONTEV 03059 100309Z

3. I WILL BE PRESENTING CREDENTIALS TOMORROW MORNING AT 10:00 (9:00 A.M. WASHINGTON TIME) AND HAVE LITTLE OPTION BUT TO COMMENT ON THIS RECENT DEVELOPMENT WHEN ASKED BY THE PRESIDENT AND LATER WHEN QUERIED, AS IS CUSTOMARY, BY THE PRESS WHEN I PLACE A WREATH BEFORE THE ARTIGAS MONUMENT. TO AVOID RE-ENFORCING THE GOU PROPENSITY TO MISREAD COMMENTS MADE BY USG

OFFICIALS, I THINK WE MUST BE VERY CAREFUL TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE IN COMMENTING ON THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT. I PROPOSE TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TOMORROW AND WOULD HOPE THAT UNLESS INSTRUCTED DIFFERENTLY THIS WILL BE THE LINE FOLLOWED BY OTHER DEPARTMENT SPOKESMEN.

A) WE ARE ENCOURAGED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY HAS GIVEN PUBLIC CONFIRMATION TO A POLICY ANNOUNCED LAST YEAR TO HOLD NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN 1981.

B) WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WILL LEAD TO THE CREATION OF AN ATMOSPHERE WITHIN WHICH OTHER PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS, CAN BE APPROACHED IN A POSITIVE MANNER.

C) ALTHOUGH THE PROCESS LEADING TO ELECTIONS IS ONLY IN ITS INSIPIENT STAGE, WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN URUGUAY RETURNS TO ITS ILLUSTRIOUS AND INTERNATIONALLY RESPECTED TRADITION OF POLITICAL AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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